

**Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo**  
**Friday, August 31, 2012**

**From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE):**

1. [Decisions](#) on career-technical education, residency posted
2. Changes in law made regarding out-of-school [suspensions](#); RIDE provides guidance on discipline-data collection
3. RIDE [data-confidentiality policy](#) to be available in September
4. RIDE to host [EPSS "Getting Started" webinars](#) for teachers, evaluators
5. New Student Learning Objective, [teacher-evaluation resources](#) available
6. RIDE posts [Induction](#) Newsletter; collecting beginning-teacher data through October
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**From other state agencies:**

9. Attorney General announces awareness campaign on [texting while driving](#)

**Other:**

10. [National Teachers Hall of Fame](#) seeking nominations

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**Action Item Calendar**

September 10: [IMS Roles](#) Form due

September 10: [RITEAF forms](#) due

November 1: [Presidential Scholar](#) nominations due

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**From RIDE:**

1. **Decisions on career-technical education, residency posted**

Our Legal Office has posted these two decisions, on student access to out-of-district career-technical programs and on residency:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2012/013-12 Studetn E. Doe v. E. Providence S.C. 082712.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2012/013-12%20Studetn%20E.%20Doe%20v.%20E.%20Providence%20S.C.%20082712.pdf)

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2012/014-12 Studetn W. Doe v. E. Greenwich S.C. 082712.pdf](http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/RideDirectory/DOCS/2012/014-12%20Studetn%20W.%20Doe%20v.%20E.%20Greenwich%20S.C.%20082712.pdf)

## **2. Changes in law made regarding out-of-school suspensions; RIDE provides guidance on discipline-data collection**

Please see this message from our Offices of Data, Analysis, and Research and Student, Community, and Academic Supports:

This summer a state law was passed and signed by the Governor ([S2542 Sub A/H7287 Sub A](#)), which states that “no school shall use a student’s truancy or absenteeism as the sole basis for using an out-of-school suspension as a disciplinary action.” In our discipline-data collection, truancy or absenteeism includes skipping class, skipping detention, skipping in-school suspension, leaving school grounds, tardiness, and truancy. In-school suspensions are still allowable, though not required, for these infractions.

In addition, several important changes have been made that affect the collection of discipline data for the coming school year. First of all, in order to populate the Early Warning System, which is under development, as well as to improve the quality of the data, discipline data must now be reported to RIDE on a daily basis rather than just at the end of the year. Second, some of the codes and definitions of codes in this collection have been changed for clarity and to conform better with federal reporting requirements. Descriptions of these changes – as well as of changes to other collections – are available on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/onis/datacollectionchanges.aspx>.

We have also developed guidance for LEAs on the discipline-data collection to help clarify points of confusion. This guidance has been posted on the RIDE website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/dataworks/documents/Guidance2012-13DisciplineCollection.pdf>.

In particular, there appears to be some confusion about the different types of disciplinary actions, leading to the over-reporting of alternative-program placements. We expect that LEAs will make reasonable efforts to provide all students with some types of educational services, regardless of any disciplinary infractions and resulting disciplinary actions. Please be aware of the following definitions:

In-School Suspension is defined as:

Temporary removal of a student from the regular classroom for disciplinary purposes, during which time the student remains under the direct supervision of, and in the same physical location as, school personnel. Typically, the student is required to complete school work during this time. The student may or may not receive counseling or therapeutic services. In-school suspension is generally shorter in duration (i.e. 10 days or less).

Alternate Program Placement is defined as:

Instances in which school personnel (but not the IEP Team) – or a Hearing Officer – order the removal of a child from his/her current educational placement to an appropriate alternative educational setting, following a disciplinary infraction. This setting enables the child to continue to receive educational services and participate in the general education curriculum although in another setting. An alternate-program placement must provide the student with sufficient course work from appropriately certified teachers to enable the student to make regular progress in his/her school work. The student may or may not receive counseling or therapeutic services. Alternate program placement is generally longer in duration (i.e. more than 10 days).

We will develop more extensive guidance on discipline in the coming months. In the meantime, please make sure that your principals, guidance staff, data managers, and data clerks are all aware of this information. Please contact Jan Mermin, at 222-4710 or [jan.mermin@ride.ri.gov](mailto:jan.mermin@ride.ri.gov), if you have general questions about suspensions, or contact Alice Woods, at 222-8983 or [alice.woods@ride.ri.gov](mailto:alice.woods@ride.ri.gov), if you have questions about suspensions of students with IEPs.

### **3. RIDE data-confidentiality policy to be available in September**

Please see this message from our Office of Data, Analysis, and Research:

RIDE manages many data repositories designed to collect data, store data, provide access to data, and compile and report data. RIDE data repositories include data relating to schools, students, and personnel. Our Director of Data, Analysis, and Research is the designated authority to establish and maintain a system of data protections for RIDE data repositories, in accordance with the Federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Rhode Island Educational Records Bill of Rights Act, and other applicable state and federal laws. With all the new data systems and requirements coming online, we are finalizing a confidentiality policy to ensure that all data in our repositories are securely maintained to provide safeguards for all personally identifiable information and to ensure intended use of data. This policy includes RIDE responsibilities for the security of data and the restricted access protocols for all RIDE employees. RIDE will publish this new policy document next month (September).

Please contact Michael Ferry, at 222-8258 or [michael.ferry@ride.ri.gov](mailto:michael.ferry@ride.ri.gov), if you have questions or would like guidance developing a local confidentiality policy.

#### **4. RIDE to host EPSS “Getting Started” webinars for teachers, evaluators**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

In preparation for the opening of the RIDEmap portal on September 12, which will provide educators with access to the Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS), RIDE is hosting two live webinars with Q&A sessions. The first EPSS “Getting Started” webinar is designed for teachers and is scheduled for 3:30 – 5 p.m. on September 11. The second EPSS “Getting Started” webinar is designed for evaluators and is scheduled for 3:30 – 5 p.m. on September 18.

For additional information about the EPSS webinars, including registration information, please go to:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/EPSS.aspx>

#### **5. New Student Learning Objective, teacher-evaluation resources available**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

In addition to the updated Student Learning Objective (SLO) samples that were recently posted, RIDE has added a narrated PowerPoint for teachers and additional guidance on writing SLOs for all educators. Both resources can be used for independent study or facilitated group learning.

The Student Learning Objective resources are applicable for all LEAs, and are available at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/SLO.aspx>

Personnel evaluating teachers in LEAs implementing the Rhode Island Model are expected to complete the Framework for Teaching Proficiency System (FFTPS) classroom observation training and proficiency test by November 15. To help personnel evaluating teachers maximize the FFTPS, we have developed a study guide that includes training tips and proficiency test tips. RIDE has also developed a training organizer to help evaluators plan their time effectively.

To access the FFTPS study guide and training organizer, please go to:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/Training.aspx>

#### **6. RIDE posts Induction Newsletter; collecting beginning-teacher data through October**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

First, we would like to start by saying thank you for your diligence in recruiting, hiring, and communicating the beginning-teacher data for the current school year. Your Human Resource Departments have done a wonderful job. If your LEA has hired new HR personnel, please notify [Hilda.potrzeba@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Hilda.potrzeba@ride.ri.gov) so she can keep the listserv up to date, which is our main source of contact with this group.

We are in a much better place this year in hiring Induction Coaches, we are very close to having solid caseloads for each Induction Coach, and we would not be where we today without your support. We now have a total of 24 fully released Induction Coaches as well as 8 alternates and 2 Option 2 Induction Coaches who will work in their own district supporting at least one teacher designated by the building principal. It is our hope that the alternates and the Option 2 Coaches will be afforded the opportunity to complete all of the year-one training and participate in a portion of the forums.

Please continue to provide beginning-teacher data to RIDE throughout the year. We will continue to add beginning teachers to caseloads through October 31. Beginning teachers hired after October 31 will be supported in the 2013-14 school year, which follows last year's practice.

As the Induction Coaches start their work with beginning teachers in your schools, it would be wonderful if the building principals would designate a small area for them to work. At times, schedules change and they use this extra time to do the data-entry work that we require. It would also be very helpful if the coaches could have Internet access, as they are each provided with a laptop to help them complete their responsibilities.

Our first official Induction Newsletter has been created and is located on the RIDE website, on the Induction Program page, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/mentoring.aspx> .

The New Teacher Center published a great story about Michelle Livsey, an Induction Coach on loan from Exeter-West Greenwich, and a beginning teacher that she supported from Westerly. If you copy and paste the URL below you will find the article entitled:

The secret to one math teacher's success  
[http://www.newteachercenter.org/blog/secret-one-math-teacherssuccess?utm\\_source=eReflectionsAugust2012&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=eReflectionsAugust2012&utm\\_content=text-link](http://www.newteachercenter.org/blog/secret-one-math-teacherssuccess?utm_source=eReflectionsAugust2012&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=eReflectionsAugust2012&utm_content=text-link)

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to serving your LEAs again this year.

As always, if you have any questions or feedback, do not hesitate to contact Hilda or Donna:

- Hilda Potrzeba, at [hilda.potrzeba@ride.ri.gov](mailto:hilda.potrzeba@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8891
- Donna Okrasinski, at [donna.okrasinski@ride.ri.gov](mailto:donna.okrasinski@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8982

## **7. RIDE signs price agreement to provide LEAs access to all-inclusive technology package**

Please see this message from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

In our continued efforts to increase access to technology for student and educators, a master price agreement and a memorandum of understanding are in place to provide schools with a bundled technology solution. The solution includes the technology device and software, support and maintenance, and extensive professional-development opportunities. The agreement includes flexible leasing options that are designed to meet LEA financing needs. Please see this document that outlines the bundled solution and leasing options (to be posted by close of business today [Friday]):

[http://ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/All\\_Inclusive/docs/All%20Inclusive%20Device%20Solution%20-%201Pager.pdf](http://ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/All_Inclusive/docs/All%20Inclusive%20Device%20Solution%20-%201Pager.pdf)

Further details are available on the RIDE website, at:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/All\\_Inclusive/All\\_Inclusive.aspx](http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/All_Inclusive/All_Inclusive.aspx)

## **8. RIDE schedules training sessions on Virtual Learning Math Modules**

Please see this message from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

A great big “thank you” to those who participated in piloting the beta version of the Virtual Learning Math Modules (VLMM) at the end of the school year and during the summer! Our vendor, TechComm Partners, has been very responsive in addressing all items and incorporating suggestions into the next version of the modules that will be utilized as the project is scaled up this fall. Four training sessions have been scheduled for next month and early October for schools wishing to utilize the modules during the current school year. The content each of the training sessions will be the same, so interested VLMM team members need only attend one of the sessions. Registration for the training sessions will open on **Tuesday** (September 4). Additionally, RIDE will be scheduling a webinar to update VLMM team members who have already participated in training and implementation. Here is a schedule of the training session:

Monday, September 17  
3 – 4:30 p.m.  
Quonset Development Corporation  
Board Room  
95 Cripe Street - Annex Building  
North Kingstown

Wednesday, September 19

3 – 4:30 p.m.  
Healthcentric Advisors  
235 Promenade Street, Suite 500  
Providence

Monday, October 1  
3 – 4:30 p.m.  
Quonset Development Corporation  
Board Room  
95 Cripe Street - Annex Building  
North Kingstown

Wednesday, October 3  
3 – 4:30 p.m.  
Healthcentric Advisors  
235 Promenade Street, Suite 500  
Providence

Please visit the RIDE web site for further information:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/VLMM/vlmm.aspx>

***From other state agencies:***

**9. Attorney General announces awareness campaign on texting while driving**

Please see this notice from the Office of the Attorney General:

To bring greater awareness to the dangers of texting while driving, Attorney General Peter Kilmartin and the R.I. Department of Transportation are teaming up to bring AT&T's powerful ["Texting & Driving...It Can Wait"](#) awareness campaign to schools throughout Rhode Island this year. The "It Can Wait" campaign will launch in September with a visit to Cranston High School East to speak to students about the dangers while texting, show a compelling documentary featuring families impacted by texting and driving accidents, and invite the students and teachers to take a no-texting-and-driving pledge.

If you are interested in learning more about the campaign and how to bring it *to your high school*, please visit the Attorney General's website, at [www.riag.ri.gov](http://www.riag.ri.gov), or contact Amy Kempe, at 274-4400 ext. 2234. In addition, Attorney General Kilmartin will be sending principals a letter with more information on how to participate.

***Other:***

**10. National Teachers Hall of Fame seeking nominations**

Please see this message from The National Teachers Hall of Fame:

The National Teachers Hall of Fame, a nonprofit organization founded in 1989 as a tribute to our nation's most important profession – teaching – is accepting applications for the 2013 induction class. Individuals inducted into the Hall of Fame serve as ambassadors for the Hall of Fame and for the teaching profession. Application forms, as well as more information about the Hall of Fame, are available at the Hall of Fame website:

<http://www.nthf.org>

***RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:***

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>